

**Center for Crime Victim Services
Board Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2020**

Board Members Present: Bob Paolini, Susan Ide, Margaret Joyal.

Absent: Richard Katzman, Jerry O'Neill.

Staff Members Present: Chris Fenno, Elaine Boyce, Christine Morrison, Jodie Bacon, Abby Gladstone-Strobel, Michelle Pelletier, Carol Brochu, Melinda Meyer. **Absent:** Carol Morgan.

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 PM.

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of June 8, 2020 and approved them unanimously, as presented.

COMPENSATION CLAIMS REPORT

Christine Morrison presented the Compensation report through June 2020. She noted that due to the pandemic, the courts were not producing as much work as usual. Compensation expenses in June were generally low, with the exception of \$18K related to Homicide claims, which Christine noted was within the typical range for that category. June marked the end of Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) and compared to the previous fiscal year, overall compensation expenses for FY20 were lower than in FY19. However, expenses related to several categories including Arson were higher in FY20 than in the previous year. The Compensation Report was accepted as presented.

REVIEW OF SPECIFIC COMPENSATION CLAIMS

Claim 59562 – This claim was originally brought to the Board of Directors at the meeting on August 19, 2019, where the Board approved a one-time exception to the Mental Health Policy, to allow a therapist who is not licensed in the state of Massachusetts to provide mental health treatment to the victim. The victim went to school in Maine, so the Compensation Program had not paid for any counseling. Since school was closed due to COVID-19, the parent of the victim has asked the Compensation Program to pay for telehealth counseling through the Zoom platform. Compensation staff asked the therapist if Zoom was HIPPA compliant. The therapist replied that instead of using Zoom, she would use Doxy.me, which is HIPPA compliant. The Board were asked if they would approve an exception to the Mental Health Policy, to approve payment to this therapist for counseling via the Doxy.me platform. Susan Ide had recently gone through a telehealth training and she confirmed that Doxy.me is indeed HIPAA compliant. Motion was made, seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to approve the payment as an exception to the Compensation Program's Mental Health Policy.

Claim 66295 – This claim had been denied by the Board at the May 11, 2020 meeting, because the victim/applicant had violated a criminal law of the state of Vermont and was charged with unlawful mischief/aggravated assault. The state then dismissed the charges against the applicant and the other charged suspect. The Board were aware of the dismissed charges when they denied the claim in May. The applicant was appealing the Board's decision and was seeking compensation for childcare, counseling, crime scene clean-up, dental expenses, eyeglasses, lost wages, medical, mileage/gas, rent/relocation, safety/security, and travel expenses. After reviewing the claim information, motion

was made and seconded to uphold the original denial. With one Board member voting to approve, the Board voted 2 to 1, to deny the appeal.

Claim 66654 – This claim was brought to the Board to determine whether or not the victim could be compensated for payment for CBD oil and other prescribed medications / “nutraceuticals.” The total cost of the CBD oil and other medications was \$378.79. Per the Compensation Program’s guidelines/procedures, the Board must approve payment for CBD/supplements and other non-licensed therapies on a case by case basis. Margaret Joyal noted that the Board has no way to know for certain that any medications prescribed by any physician are completely accurate and effective. In answer to a question from Bob Paolini, staff confirmed that compensation payments for CBD are not eligible for the 60% federal reimbursement. Carol Brochu, CCVS Finance Manager, noted that so far there have been no large expenses for such products. After discussion, motion was made, seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to approve payment.

RESTITUTION UNIT REPORT

Michelle Pelletier reported on the Restitution Unit (RU) for June 2020. She noted that all RU staff had returned to work on-site, after the office was shut-down from mid-March through June, due to the pandemic. Collections for June 2020 came in \$10K short of the goal, but the Collectors brought in \$45K and another \$25K was received via tax offsets. Looking at the entire fiscal year, collections for FY20 were about \$220K less than in FY19. The last quarter of FY20 showed a large decrease due to COVID19, however Michelle noted that collections had decreased over the entire year compared to the previous fiscal year. In June 2020, only 10 restitution judgement orders (RJO) were received statewide, with Chittenden County only producing 1 RJO. Michelle expects the low numbers to continue for some time. The Restitution Report was accepted as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Carol Brochu presented the Financial Report through June 2020. She noted that CCVS was seeing a decrease in appropriations, which were down across all CCVS special funds, by almost one million dollars, compared to what she’d budgeted for. Despite this, all funds were in the black due to healthy starting balances at the beginning of FY20, and careful cuts in the last months of FY20. All things considered, Carol felt that CCVS was ending FY20 in decent shape. She advised that there is always a period of adjustment at the end of every fiscal year (until about July 15 of the new fiscal year), during which the state’s data may change. CCVS had been informed of an upcoming federal audit by the OJP (Office of Justice Programs) during which auditors will do a “desk review” to look at almost all of CCVS’s federal grants. The Financial Report was accepted as presented.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Motion made and seconded to adjourn. Adjourned at 2:40 PM

Next VCCVS Board Meeting Date:
Monday,
August 10, 2020 - 1:30 PM
Via Zoom Meeting